

**Joey Rodriguez “As the prospective phd emails are in full swing, I thought I would mention a few things to think about. These emails can provide a small boost for your application in some rare cases but if done poorly, it can't be viewed negatively. Some thoughts:”**

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As the prospective phd emails are in full swing, I thought I would mention a few things to think about. These emails can provide a small boost for your application in some rare cases but if done poorly, it can't be viewed negatively. Some thoughts:



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1. Do not send the same email to a bunch of professors in the same department. It will look poorly and people will notice. If there are that many people you would want to work with, then apply!



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1. "Ask specific questions": Don't ask "Could you tell me about your research?". This email is a way to get a bit of information that is relevant to applying to that program. Ask things like: "Are you taking on new students in the upcoming cycle?".



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1. "Do your homework on the person" I have no problem receiving these emails and providing quick replies to questions but when you are asking me about my theoretical work in cosmology or active geological research (I don't do any of this), it comes off poorly.



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1. In the end, this email is not likely to increase your chances in most cases but it is an opportunity to get information relevant for applying (like are the people you want to work with taking on students)". Of course give some background on who you are and your interests.



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1. It is unlikely you will get a video call with someone prior to applying. Post-acceptance, you would have the chance to sit down one on one with any potential advisors.



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With 100s of applications and available funding (which is how we pay PhD students) staying relatively flat over the years, it is just very competitive right now. Good luck with your applications!